



# WORKFORCE CONNECTION



Anaconda Job Service  
One Stop Workforce Center  
307 East Park Street



## Manager's Corner

Marilyn Ohman, Manager

### THESE TRYING TIMES

We didn't think Montana would see the affects of the recession as fast as other states but it's here and the best thing we can do about it is be proactive. We have seen our president and congressionals working to try to make the impact as light as possible but you and I know, that is a huge undertaking and almost an impossibility for some. All we can do is work on the 'Now'... we need to be creative at alternatives for our businesses and for our personal interests.

That's where we, your local Job Service can fit in. We are here to help you during these trying times. We offer a stepping stone to resources, programs and information that may provide you with solutions or assist you in your unique business needs. Here is information and ideas from Job Service offices around that state that can help you in these trying and challenging times.

First of all, the biggest asset of most businesses is their staff and operating efficiently in today's economy is a must. It is obvious in this economic storm that local companies are addressing the downturn in layoffs as indicated by the high unemployment numbers in our area. Less than a year ago it was a job seekers market....more jobs than seekers. It has turned full circle.....less jobs...more seekers. Be aware of things you can do to protect you and your employees when at all possible.

Here are a few tips:

1. **Brainstorm**-Ask you employees for ideas on how your company can save. It isn't just a trite saying-Your employees **ARE** your most important resource. They are closest to the front lines and often see things in a different light. Asking them to be direct partners in the success of your business may bring you innovative ideas and boost morale. Don't think that they aren't thinking about the economy...it has affected everyone.
2. **Job Sharing**-Employees maybe willing to split a position, maybe share childcare responsibilities and save each other additional monies.
3. **Reduce hours**-Employees can collect partial unemployment benefits when their hours are cut and you still keep a trained workforce. Training new workers is a huge hit on a businesses bottom line.
4. **Network**- Look for creative 'out of the box' ideas online, in trade magazines, at Job Service in the resource area.
5. **Utilize Resources** that specialize in assisting businesses like yours: Job Service, <http://wsd.dli.mt.gov/local/anaconda/>; your community Economic Development group, the Small Business Administration, Headwaters RC&D and the Business Expansion and Retention program or BEAR. Contact our office at 563-3444 for information on any of these programs or go online to our website and print the Tri-County Community Resources list. It's a great tool for you and your employees and can help you both stretch your resources.

If a layoff is inevitable, please call us before it happens so we may assist your employees in making the transition smooth. All Montana Job Service offices have Rapid Response teams in place to do just that and are ready to assist in developing a transition plan for you and your employees. These can be very stressful times but by handling a layoff or reduction in hours with good communication and with a supportive attitude, you can reduce some of the stress on both sides of the layoff. We can help you navigate through the process so you and your employees' experience is smooth and beneficial to all involved.



## The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Many areas of the state will benefit from President Obama and Congress' passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Job Services throughout Montana will be receiving additional Workforce Investment Act funding. The two programs operated by our office that will receive additional funding through the stimulus package is the Adult Program and the Dislocated Worker Program. The Adult Program assists those that are unemployed or underemployed who are not able to meet their families basic needs. The Dislocated Worker Program assist those permanently laid off. Both programs can help individuals upgrade their skills and/or help with job search expenses. We have been challenged to become innovative and creative in using these funds to improve the skills of the workforce and to better position America's Workforce in meeting the needs of a new and emerging economy. The additional funds sunset on March 31, 2010. Authorization to spend the funds is expected by April 1, 2008 but remember....we have current funding in place that can do any of these programs. It is understood that the monies coming through ARRA will have less stringent eligibility criteria for those needing to access the program so more people can be served.

These funds can also help employers, like you, to train new workers through on the job training agreements in occupations that have good wages and require a higher level of skill. These programs are geared to help people become self sufficient and also is a way to help a business lower the monies they spend in training new staff. Everyone knows that turnover is very expensive. At the end of the job training agreement, the employer has a skilled, trained employee.

Some local Job Service offices have Incumbent Worker Training dollars to assist businesses in upgrading skills of their current workforce to meet their needs. Unfortunately our Job Service office does not have one of those grants but there are some other agencies in the area that may be able to help you out in that arena.

Congress put lots of funding in the summer youth program also, a program that was pretty much eliminated in Montana several years ago. The program targets low income youth and teaches them workplace basic skills and places those youth with employers that qualify. The program operator for our area is the Human Resource Council District X11 out of Butte. That particular program's age group has been expanded from a maximum age of 21 to age 24.

The Anaconda Job Service will be offering Reemployment Workshops on a bi-weekly basis to inform and educate people about what we can do as an agency to help them upgrade their skills and/or find suitable work. We will keep employers informed through Chambers of Commerce meetings, newsletters and the media.

Also-remember that **new tax tables** for employees have been put into place. Make sure you are using the most current ones. This was implemented through the ARRA to help workers get more take home pay.

We want to hear from you. Please email our office at: [AnacondaJS@mt.gov](mailto:AnacondaJS@mt.gov) if you have questions or there is something we can help you with. The following are some questions we would like you to think about. Send your answers via email and we would be glad to address them.

What are the workforce needs of your business?

Where do you struggle when finding qualified applicants?

Are there positions in your business that require specific/detailed training?

There are a few other ways you save in your business. One is advertising your open positions and accepting the applications for you. Listing a job opening with the Anaconda Job Service is **FREE** and your listing is put on our state of the art website for job seekers to see. There are two choices you have in listing your openings. 1-You can log onto our website at: [www.jobs.mt.gov](http://www.jobs.mt.gov) and follow the employer instructions and input your job listing on your own or 2-You can call us with the details of the job you would like to advertise and we can input it and notify qualified applicants. Face it...we live in a world where technology is the vehicle of choice when job seekers are looking for work and we don't charge advertising fees!

How does that work? Job seekers can log on to our website at [www.jobs.mt.gov](http://www.jobs.mt.gov) and basically input their information that they would include on a resume or application. We do an applicant search by matching your job qualifications to the qualifications the job seekers have input. Those whose qualifications match your specifications are contacted through email, by mail or by phone. The job seeker notified then decides whether they want to apply or not.

You also have a choice of just listing it on your own with no intervention from Job Service. It can go out on the website and job seekers can seek that opening on their own. If your qualifications and experience are specific, those job seekers that don't meet your criteria will not be able to access the information on how to apply. Your business name is not disclosed either so that people can't opt to bypass the application instructions and just show up at your door.

In speaking with a local accountant, the question was asked why more employers/businesses are not taking advantage of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) that is available to employers. In several of these newsletters, this specific credit has been included encouraging businesses to take advantage of the program. New employees must meet certain criteria in order for them to qualify and for you to be eligible to take the credit which is a direct tax credit. The paperwork is minimal but the savings can be HUGE. One of the most current qualifying criteria is that the applicant be a resident of Deer Lodge County. Pretty simple. Deer Lodge County fits specific criteria for the credit. Unfortunately, the other two counties we serve, Granite and Powell don't fit the county use criteria but the other qualifying factors apply universally.

For more information on this credit, go to the Department of Labor and Industry's website at: <http://www.doleta.gov/business/Incentives/opptax/>

### REQUIRED POSTERS

The 5 in 1 required employment posters that all businesses must have displayed have been changed again. Remember, you can get these from your local Job Service office free of charge. The latest revision date is January 2009 which is listed on the bottom of the poster. If you have one older than that, please call our office to get the latest version. The notices you get in the mail where there is a charge for the poster and there is a threat of a fine is NOT from the Montana Department of Labor so ignore those notices. We do not charge for the posters but it is a requirement to have them posted when employees are a part of your business. Call us at 563-3444 or stop in at 307 East Park, Suite 205 to pick some up.

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

Below is a yearly comparison of the unemployment rates for the Tri-County Area

County	Current unemployment rates as of January 2009	Unemployment rates one year ago January 2008
Deer Lodge County	8.0%	5.6%
Powell County	9.7%	7.3%
Granite County	9.7%	5.2%
Montana Average*	6.7%	4.3%



**ANACONDA JOB SERVICE  
ONE STOP WORKFORCE CENTER**

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Anaconda, MT 59711

Phone: 406-563-3444

*Superior Service for a Working Montana.*

WEB

• [wsd.dli.mt.gov/local/anaconda](http://wsd.dli.mt.gov/local/anaconda)



### B.E.A.R. Interviews



Feeling the crutch of the recession????....here is a service offered to you free and gives you resources and information that can help in these times of economic uncertainty.

Volunteer for a B.E.A.R. interview. Be OPEN for business. The B.E.A.R program is a statewide program offered to area businesses to help in keeping their business successful. B.E.A.R. (Business Expansion and Retention) offers business owners like you the opportunity to share insights. Many businesses in Montana have received assistance in areas such as workforce training, business management, global and domestic marketing and acquiring financial support. The BEAR program's resource referrals assist businesses in evaluating growth potential, addressing areas of concern and referring you to resources you might otherwise not know exist. Some of the assistance offered includes marketing plans, business plans, training and education, information technology and more. The time is right to have a BEAR interview. So please call and set up a time. We would like to interview any business in Southwestern Montana: Anaconda, Deer Lodge and Philipsburg.

The Southwest Montana Bear Team consists of individuals from economic development, workforce development, and financial institutions in the Butte/Anaconda area. All information acquired is confidential. Give B.E.A.R. a try. You will be amazed at the information and resources that come out of your interview. Call Shirley at 563-4122 or Marilyn at 563-4121 to schedule your interview.

### OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

We have been getting calls about restaurants being targeted with misleading advertising concerning a required posting for employee's hand washing. It is NOT A REQUIREMENT and there is no fine or jail time if you do not post it. It is up to the business if they want to post it or not. We do have a poster available to you free of charge. Call our office at 563-3444 or stop in to get one.

**FREE TRAINING:** The Anaconda Chamber of Commerce will be hosting a free SuperHost Training on May 7th, 2009. If your business offers ANY type of service dealing with the public, this training is truly a huge benefit for your business and your employees. Take advantage of something that is worthwhile. In this 'recession' it is only smart to look at all angles to make your business relevant and better. Call 563-2400 for more information and to sign up your employees.